

## Commas

Use a **comma** to indicate a pause or a change in thought. This helps to keep words and ideas from running together so that the writing is easier to read. For a writer, no other form of punctuation is more important to understand than the comma.

### 644.1

#### Between Items in a Series

Use commas between words, phrases, or clauses in a series. (A series contains at least three items.) (See page 575.)

**Chinese, English, and Hindi are the three most widely used languages in the world.** (words)

**Being comfortable with technology, working well with others, and knowing another language are important skills for today's workers.** (phrases)

**My dad works in a factory, my mom works in an office, and I work in school.** (clauses)

### 644.2

#### To Keep Numbers Clear

Use commas to separate the digits in a number in order to distinguish hundreds, thousands, millions, and so on.

**More than 104,000 people live in Kingston, the capital of Jamaica.**

**The population of the entire country of Liechtenstein is only 29,000.**

**NOTE** Commas are not used in years.

**The world population was 6.1 billion by 2003.**

### 644.3

#### In Dates and Addresses

Use commas to set off items in an address and items in a date.

**On August 28, 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr., gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.**

**The address of the King Center is 449 Auburn Avenue NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30312.**

**NOTE** No comma is placed between the state and ZIP code. Also, when only the month and year are given, no comma is needed.

**In January 2029 we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Reverend King's birth.**

## Practice

### Commas 1

- Between Items in a Series
- To Keep Numbers Clear
- In Dates and Addresses



For each sentence below, write the series, date, address, or number that should include a comma. Add the commas.

**Example:** The Civil War was caused by differences in opinion about slavery economics and politics.

*slavery, economics, and politics*

1. The war officially began on April 12 1861 when Confederate troops fired upon Fort Sumter, South Carolina.
2. Today Fort Sumter is a national monument at 1214 Middle Street Sullivan's Island South Carolina 29482.
3. South Carolina left the Union, and Virginia Arkansas Tennessee and North Carolina soon followed.
4. More than 13000 Union soldiers and 10000 Confederates lost their lives during the Battle of Shiloh.
5. Three other major battles of the war were fought at Wilderness Spotsylvania and Cold Harbor.
6. After four years of fighting, the war officially ended with the Confederates' surrender on April 9 1865 in Appomattox, Virginia.
7. The final death toll of the Civil War was more than 620000 soldiers from both the North and the South.
8. You can learn about the Civil War by reading government papers diaries and letters written during that time period.
9. You can read records of soldiers who fought in the Civil War at the National Archives 700 Pennsylvania Avenue Washington DC 20408.